WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A color photothermographic element for accurately recording a scene as an image comprising a support and coated on the support a plurality of hydrophilic colloid layers comprising radiation sensitive silver-halide emulsion layers forming recording layer units for separately recording blue, green, and red exposures wherein the amount of silver halide in the element is 1 to 4.5 g/m^2.

2. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 wherein the amount of silver halide in the element is 1.5 to 4.0 g/m^2.

3. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 wherein the amount of silver halide in the element is 2.0 to 3.5 g/m^2.

4. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 wherein at least 50% of the grain projected area of the silver halide is provided by silver halide having a grain thickness greater than 0.06 microns.

5. The color photothermographic element of claim 4, wherein the grain thickness is > 0.08, most preferable > 0.10 microns.

6. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 wherein the fraction of silver as silver halide relative to total silver, including both silver halide and silver donor, is from 30 to 85% by weight.

7. The color photographic element of claim 1 in which the total amount of color masking coupler is not more than 0.2 $mmol/m^2$.

8. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 in which the total amount of permanent Dmin adjusting dyes is not more than 0.2 $mmol/m^2$.

9. The color photothermographic element of claim 1 in which the permanent antihalation density is not more than 0.3 in the blue, green and red density.

10. A method of processing a photothermographic element for accurately recording a scene as an image which element comprising a support and coated on the support a plurality of hydrophilic colloid layers comprising radiation sensitive silver-halide emulsion layers forming recording layer units for separately recording blue, green, and red exposures wherein the amount of silver halide in the element is 1 to 4.5 g/m^2, which method comprises thermally developing an imagewise exposed element and then scanning the element, to form an electronic image representation of said imagewise exposure, which scanning occurs before removing any silver halide from the film.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the scanning employs a diffuse scanner.

12. The method according to claim 10 wherein the image formation comprises the step of digitizing a first electronic image representation formed from an imagewise exposed, developed, and scanned imaging element to form a digital image.

13. The method according to claim 10 wherein image formation comprising the step of modifying a first electronic image representation formed from and imagewise exposed, developed, and scanned imaging element formulated to form a second electronic image representation.

14. The method according to claim 10 comprising storing, transmitting, printing, or displaying the electronic image representation of an image derived from an imagewise exposed, developed, scanned imaging element.

15. The method according to claim 10, wherein said electronic image representation is a digital image.

16. The method according to claim 10, wherein printing the image is accomplished with any of the following printing technologies: electrophotography; inkjet; thermal dye sublimation; or CRT or LED printing to sensitized photographic paper.

17. The method according to claim 10 wherein the photothermographic element contains an imaging layer comprising, in addition to the blocked developer, a light sensitive silver halide emulsion, and a non-light sensitive silver salt oxidizing agent.

18. The method according to claim 10 wherein the developing is accomplished in a dry state without the application of aqueous solutions.

19. The method according to claim 10 wherein the total amount of color masking coupler, the total amount of permanent Dmin adjusting dyes, and the permanent antihalation density, in blue, green and red density, is controlled so that the overall Dmin of the film minimizes the overall scanning noise during scanning.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the total amount of color masking coupler is not more than 0.2 mmol/m^2, the total amount of permanent Dmin adjusting dyes is not more than 0.2 mmol/m^2, and the permanent antihalation density is not more than 0.3 in the blue, green and red density.